Seminar in Developmental Psychology (PSY 452-01)
Fall 2011 Fridays 9-11:50 am DeGarmo 48

Welcome to our seminar!

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Seminar Website: [http://www.psychology.illinoisstate.edu/amhund/devseminar.htm](http://www.psychology.illinoisstate.edu/amhund/devseminar.htm)
Blackboard Login Website: [https://blackboard.illinoisstate.edu](https://blackboard.illinoisstate.edu) (also available via iCampus)
Office Hours: Mondays 2-3 pm, Wednesdays 2-3 pm, and by appointment

Seminar Overview and Objectives

The purpose of any graduate seminar is to facilitate learning and professional development via participation in a learning community. The focus of this seminar is the examination of development during childhood (infancy through middle childhood), including biological, cognitive, social, emotional, and cultural aspects. In particular, we will focus on theories, research, and applications for everyday interactions to garner an appreciation and understanding of normative and non-normative patterns of development. The goals of this seminar are (1) to understand the mechanisms that shape development during childhood and (2) to articulate, critique, and defend theoretical, empirical, and applied positions concerning the nature of development. These objectives will be assessed through participation in and leadership of class discussion, systematic reflection, and completion of written reaction papers and a research paper/proposal.

This seminar is part of the developmental graduate sequence. In addition, it helps fulfill objectives for the School Psychology doctoral program (e.g., learning basic psychological principles, understanding cultural and individual differences), as well as standards for the Specialist program (i.e., Standard 4: Socialization and Development of Life Skills, Standard 5: Student Diversity in Development and Learning, and Standard 8: Home/School/Community Collaborations).

For each topic, our class time will be devoted to discussion of readings and their implications. Because active participation is crucial to the success of our seminar, it is imperative that everyone completes the assigned readings and writes cogent reaction papers in preparation for discussion. It is also critical that everyone brings the readings to class and is an active and engaged participant in our discussions during class. We will share responsibility for leading discussion during class time (see below).

Required Readings


Text readings are listed by chapter in the syllabus. (text available at campus bookstores)

References for additional assigned readings are listed below (readings available electronically—contact me for details)

Grading Requirements and Details

Grades will be based on preparedness, participation, and professionalism, according to the following requirements:

1. **Class participation.** Participation is essential for our learning together as a community of scholars. You are expected to read the required readings for each session and to attend and contribute through questions and discussion. Everyone must bring the assigned readings to class to facilitate careful discussion. In addition, everyone must pose questions, make observations, and provide insights regarding the readings and their implications. Please be prepared to share your thoughts, as well as to respond to those made by colleagues, during class time. Quality participation is essential. In addition, you will post a single paragraph reflection by Monday at noon (or by noon the day following our meeting during finals week) explaining the most important thing you learned in relation to the topic from Friday, as well as how your understanding is evolving (i.e., helpful points, controversies, uncertainties, links to other topics, future application or exploration). Reflection paragraphs must be submitted in relation to all class meetings. Class participation details will be available through Blackboard and will constitute 160 points (see below).

2. **Reaction papers.** You will write and submit a 1-page (double spaced) reaction paper motivated by the readings for each week (except the first class meeting). Your reaction papers must include a critical analysis and evaluation of the readings, an integration and synthesis of the findings, and/or a discussion of the implications of the work. The papers are not meant to be summaries or opinion pieces, but rather reflections based on critical reading and thinking. Papers must be posted in Blackboard by 8 am the day before class (attached as Word documents to your discussion posting
and pasted into the discussion window). All students are responsible for reading the reaction papers prior to class so that their central ideas can serve as a basis for discussion. There are two exceptions to this general pattern. (1) The first week’s assignment is to post a “Getting to Know You” summary in Blackboard, including your name, year and area at ISU, something interesting about yourself, one personal goal for this seminar (e.g., what you hope to learn, how you hope to approach learning in the class), your plans after ISU, and a picture of yourself by 12 pm on Monday of the second week. (2) The last reflection paper (2 pages double spaced, due by 8 am the day before our finals week class meeting) should summarize the most important topics, details, or ideas you learned in this class and how that knowledge will impact your future endeavors. Papers will be returned when we meet with comments and a score (0-10 points). In total, the reaction papers, GTKY post, and reflection paper constitute 160 points (see below).

3. **Discussion leadership.** You and a partner will be responsible for leading discussion for one class meeting. The particular topics and readings discussed will be those listed in the syllabus. It is important that you lead the discussion in a thoughtful manner. To do so, you will provide a brief overview/introduction, 4-6 discussion questions based on the assigned readings, and a brief conclusion. Your questions should help us analyze, synthesize, evaluate, interpret, and apply main ideas. Discussion questions must be posted in Blackboard by 6 pm on the Thursday before class. All students are responsible for reading and reflecting on the discussion questions before class in preparation for our discussion. Please come see me before your discussion day if you would like additional assistance. I will provide detailed feedback the week after your discussion leadership. Overall, your discussion leadership is worth 100 points.

4. **Research paper or proposal.** You have two options for your final paper: (1) You may choose to write a **research proposal** on an aspect of child development that is of interest to you. The research proposal must include a literature review (i.e., background and significance) outlining key theoretical issues and empirical findings (persuasively asserting that your project will fill an important “gap”), a method section outlining a specific research study that would logically follow from the issues and problems reviewed, a statistical analysis plan and predicted results, and a brief conclusion section highlighting key outcomes from your proposal. (2) You may choose to write a **research paper** on an aspect of child development that is of interest to you. In addition to summarizing key theoretical, empirical, and applied issues, you must provide a coherent and comprehensive integration, comparison, and/or evaluation of these details to represent “state of the art” thinking in the field and/or future directions. Your argument must be clear and compelling throughout. In either case, you will choose a topic regarding child development that relates to theoretical and empirical issues addressed in this seminar. Your paper/proposal should be 12 to 15 double-spaced pages in length. A reference section containing at least 15 sources is required but is not included in the page specifications listed above. Your research paper/proposal is due by class time the last week of classes and is worth 140 points. To facilitate timely progress on this project, you will turn in a brief summary of your paper/proposal (2 to 3 pages, typed with double spacing), outlining theoretical background, specific study ideas (e.g., participants, task, design, and predictions if writing a research proposal) or summary and integration of “state of the art” ideas if writing a paper, and key references by class time the 7th week of the semester. This summary is worth 20 points. In addition, you will meet with me individually (in person) by class time the 9th week to discuss your plans for your paper/proposal. I am happy to meet with you during your writing and editing process to discuss ideas and help make sure you are on the right track with the project. Please allow at least one week for feedback and implementation of suggestions. In addition, please consult the following resources for details about research methods and writing well:


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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Points Each</th>
<th>Total Points Possible</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection Paragraphs</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction Papers/GTKY</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>160</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Leadership</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Summary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper or Proposal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>140</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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Please find grade details in Blackboard. Seminar grades will be assigned based on standard grading criteria: 90-100% A, 80-89% B, 70-79% C, 60-69% D, 59% or lower F.

**Policies**

Late Assignments: Preparedness and promptness are important aspects of professional development. Please complete all work by the assigned date. Late assignments will be graded down in accordance with the degree of lateness (unless there is a university-mandated and officially documented reason). You will lose 10% of the possible points for each hour the reaction papers and discussion questions are late and each day the summary and research paper/proposal are late.

Academic Integrity: Unless otherwise specified in the syllabus, assignments in this seminar must be completed by you alone and should represent your best effort. Plagiarism and cheating in any form will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action and failure of this seminar. For details regarding University academic integrity policies, please consult the Code of Student Conduct (http://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/students/get-help/crr/).

Civility and Respect: We will respect one another and our learning environment. For example, interruptions during class such as coming late, using your cell phone, reading the newspaper, surfing the web, or talking to your neighbor about issues unrelated to class are disrespectful actions that will not be tolerated. Please consult the Department of Psychology civility guidelines (http://www.psychology.illinoisstate.edu/diversity/civility.shtml) and the Code of Student Conduct for complete details.

Students with Disabilities: Any student in need of special accommodation should contact 438-5853 (voice), 438-8620 (TDD).

**Schedule of Topics and Required Readings**

**Developmental Theories and Approaches**  
Week 1: Aug. 26  
Introduction
Miller Chap. 1 (pp. 1-26)  

**Blackboard “Getting to Know You” post due by next Monday at 12 pm**

Week 2: Sept. 2  
Piaget’s Constructivist Approach
Miller Chap. 2 (pp. 27-104)  
Week 3: Sept. 9

Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Approach

Miller Chap. 4 (pp. 165-203, 214-221)


Week 4: Sept. 16

Ecological Systems & Cultural Approaches

Miller Chap. 4 (pp. 203-214)


Week 5: Sept. 23

Social Cognitive & Core Knowledge Approaches (Reed Larson Visit)

Miller Chap. 5 (pp. 223-264)


Miller Chap. 9 (pp. 405-414)


Wood, D., Larson, R. W., & Brown, J. (2009). How adolescents come to see themselves as more responsible through participation in youth programs. Child Development, 80, 295-309. [This paper will prepare us to interact with our guest, Dr. Reed Larson.]

Week 6: Sept. 30

Information Processing Approach

Miller Chap. 6 (pp. 265-324)


Week 7: Oct. 7

Dynamic Systems Theory

Research Summary due by class time

Miller Chap. 9 (pp. 414-422)


**Cognitive Development**

Week 8: Virtual Meeting

Reading and Mathematics (No Class Oct. 14: Alumni Day)


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Week 9: Oct. 21

**Language**

*Individual meeting regarding research summary must be completed by class time*


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Week 10: Oct. 28

**Executive Functioning: Working Memory, Inhibition, and Attention**


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**Social and Emotional Development**

Week 11: Nov. 4

**Temperament**


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Week 12: Nov. 11

**Self-Regulation and Theory of Mind**


Miller Chap. 10 (pp. 423-437)


Seminar last offered Fall 2010, next offered Fall 2012